to the estimates derived by Planning Commission based on the Expert Group methodology. Government of India has recently announced increase in BPL allocation from 10 kg. to 20 kg. per family per month in the Budget presented in the Parliament for the financial year 2000-2001.

Strengthening of Consumer Protection Mechanism

†906. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to extend Central assistance to strengthen the consumer protection mechanism under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986;

(b) if so, the State-wise details thereof; and

(c) the share of Maharashtra therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c), Does not arise.

Import and Storage of Wheat

907. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for importing wheat despite its substantial production in the country;

(b) whether storage facility is adequate; if so, the arrangements made for its maintenance; and

(c) if not, who is responsible for wastage of thousand tones of wheat and the steps taken in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) There has been no import of wheat on

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

Government account during 1999-2000 so far. Government has imposed 50% duty on wheat imports w.e.f. 1.12.1999, which has checked the import of wheat on private account also.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Quantum of Wheat and Rice in FCI Godowns

†908. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the quantum of wheat and rice in the godowns of Food Corporation of India at the end of December, 1999 was more than that of the buffer stock;

(b) if so, what was the total quantum of this stock, separately and the year-wise quantum of wheat and rice purchased together with the purchase value; and

(c) whether Government have made estimates of the expenditure to be incurred for storage, if so, what was per ton expenditure of storage of Food Corporation of India during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.